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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/046,759	01/17/2002	Atsushi Watanabe	100353-00093	2648

7590 04/26/2007

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EXAMINER	
CERVETTI, DAVID GARCIA	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
2136	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	04/26/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/046,759	WATANABE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	David G. Cervetti	2136	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *24 January 2007*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-10* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-10* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *17 January 2002* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's arguments filed January 24, 2007, have been fully considered but are not persuasive.

2. Claims 1-10 are pending and have been examined.

Response to Amendment

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to the prior art have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

4. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

6. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Parlour et al. (US Patent 6,904,527, hereinafter Parlour).

Regarding claim 1, Parlour teaches a semiconductor integrated circuit **(col. 6, lines 30-64)**, comprising:

- a plurality of internal hardware function blocks provided inside the semiconductor integrated circuit **(col. 6, lines 30-64)**;

- a nonvolatile memory unit which stores therein coded license information indicative of a usable/unusable status separately for each of the plurality of internal hardware function blocks **(col. 6, lines 30-64, col. 7, lines 8-40)**; and
- a decoder circuit which decodes the license information stored in said nonvolatile memory unit, and makes each of the internal hardware function blocks separately either usable or unusable depending on the decoded license information **(col. 7, lines 40-67, col. 8, lines 1-16)**.

Regarding claim 2, Parlour teaches a status unit that has at least part of the decoded license information stored therein in such a manner as to be accessible from an exterior of said semiconductor integrated circuit **(col. 8, lines 40-67)**.

Regarding claim 3, Parlour teaches a calendar circuit which indicates a current date and time, wherein said decoder circuit makes said plurality of hardware function blocks usable in response to a finding that the current date and time indicated by the calendar circuit is within a valid period indicated by the decoded license information, and makes said plurality of hardware function blocks unusable in response to a finding that the current date and time indicated by the calendar circuit is after a valid period indicated by the decoded license information **(col. 6, lines 45-63)**.

Regarding claim 4, Parlour teaches a counter circuit that counts a number indicative of how many times said plurality of hardware function blocks are used, wherein said decoder circuit makes said plurality of hardware function blocks usable in response to a finding that the number counted by said counter circuit is within a number of valid use indicated by the decoded license information, and makes said plurality of

hardware function blocks unusable in response to a finding that the number counted by said counter circuit exceeds the number of valid use indicated by the decoded license information **(col. 6, lines 45-63, col. 11, lines 1-30)**.

Regarding claim 5, Parlour teaches a license encoder circuit which encodes the number counted by said counter circuit, wherein the number encoded by said license encoder circuit is stored in said nonvolatile memory unit as updated license information **(col. 6, lines 45-63, col. 11, lines 1-30)**.

Regarding claim 6, Parlour teaches wherein coding and decoding of the license information is encrypting and decrypting that prevent the license information in said nonvolatile memory unit from being illegally rewritten **(col. 9, lines 20-62)**.

Regarding claim 7, Parlour teaches wherein said decoder circuit includes: a decoder which decodes the license information stored in said nonvolatile memory unit; a license register which stores therein the decoded license information decoded by said decoder; and a control circuit which makes said plurality of hardware function blocks either usable or unusable depending on the information stored in said license register **(col. 9, lines 20-62, col. 11, lines 1-30)**.

Regarding claim 8, Parlour teaches wherein said control circuit controls a chip enable signal of said plurality of hardware function blocks in order to make said plurality of hardware function blocks either usable or unusable **(col. 9, lines 20-62, col. 11, lines 1-30)**.

Regarding claim 9, Parlour teaches wherein said control circuit controls a clock signal of said plurality of hardware function blocks in order to make said plurality of

hardware function blocks either usable or unusable **(col. 9, lines 20-62, col. 11, lines 1-30)**.

Regarding claim 10, Parlour teaches wherein said nonvolatile memory unit receives the coded license information from an external large scale integration (LSI) tester, and no external pin is provided for a purpose of receiving the coded license information **(col. 3, lines 39-63)**.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Roohparvar (US Patent 6,438,068) teaches enabling/disabling a hardware/software block.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David G. Cervetti whose telephone number is (571)272-5861. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Tuesday and Thursday-Friday.

9. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nasser Moazzami can be reached on (571)272-4195. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

10. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DGC

NASSER MOAZZAMI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100

4/24/07